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Kabul City

K A B U L   C I T Y

by

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Special Paper

KABUL CITY

SCALE 1:25 000

WAZIRABAD
TAPAE BEMARU
BEMARU
Kabul Custom
To Jalalabad
QALAE FATHULLAH
SHERPUR
AKBAR KHAN MENA
KARTE MAMURIN
KARTE PARWAN
SHAHRE NAW
KARTE WALI
NADER SHAH MENA
KOHE ALIABAD
SELO
KOHE ASMAI
TAPA E MARANJAN
KABUL UNIVERSITY
MIRWAYS MAYDAN
JAMAL MENA
KARTE CHAR
OLD CITY
SAYID NOOR M. SHAH MENA
SHAH SHAHID
KOHE SHER DARWAZA
GUZARGAH
QALA E SHADA
KARTE SEH
JANGALAK
AQA ALI SHAMS
WASEL ABAD
BINI HESAR
CHILSITOON
DEHDANA
To Paktia

Ariana Afghan Airlines	F5	
Bakhtar Afghan Airlines	F5	
Telegraph Office	F6	
Afghan Bus Service	F6	
Ghazni Motor Depot	B7	
Northern Motor Depot	D4	
Jalalabad Motor Depot	H5	
Air Port	J1	

By the order of Afghan Tourist Authority.

Points Of Interest

No.	Name	Grid
1	Royal Palace	G5
2	Afghan Tourist Organ	F6
3	Mausoleum of Abdur Rahman	F5
4	Shah do Shamshira Shrine & Mosque	F6
5	Kabul Zoo	D7
6	Babur Shah Tomb & Garden	E7
7	Noon Gun	E7
8	City Wall	E7
9	Kabul Museum	A11
10	Darulaman	A12
11	Chilsitoon	D11
12	Mausoleum of Timurshāh	F6
13	Puli Khishti Mosque	G6
14	Maiwand Monument	G6
15	Char Chata Bazaar	G6
16	Exhibition Field	H6
17	Bala Hissar Fort	H7
18	Tamim Ansar Shrine	G8
19	Mausoleum Of Nadir Shah	I6
20	Id Gah Mosque	H6
21	Independence Column	G5
22	Jade Welayat Bazaar	F5
23	Zahir Shahi Park	F4
24	Haji Yaqub Mosque	F4
25	Kolola Pushta Fort	E3
26	Sakhi Shrine	D6

Government Offices

No.	Name	Grid
1	Afghan Air Authoity	G4
2	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	F5
3	Ministry of Interior	E5
4	Police Visa Office	F5
5	Kabul Traffic Department	F6

Hotels

No.	Name	Grid
1	Spinzar Hotel	F6
2	Inter Continental Hotel	B4
3	Kabul Hotel	F5
4	Jamil, Metropole & Plaza H	F6
5	Ariana Hotel	G5
6	Park Hotel	F6
7	Mustafa Hotel	F5
8	Yamaw Hotel	F6

Restaurants

No.	Name	Grid
1	Khyber	G6
2	Bost	F4
3	Marcopolo	F4
4	25 hour Club	E4
5	Wakhan	E4
6	Gulzar	F4
7	Tritones	C8
8	Baghe Bala	B3
9	Kargha Lake-west of Kabul	

Embassies & Consulates

Name	Grid
Austria	E4
Belgium	G6
Bulgaria	G4
Czechoslvakia	E3
France	G4
Germany (Fed Rep)	G4
India	E5
Indonesia	E4
Italy	G5
Iran	F4
Iraq	E5
Japan	E4
Netherlands	G6
Pakistan	F4
People's Republic China	F5
Poland	D7
Saudi Arabia	G4
Switzerland	F4
Turkey	F4
United Nations	F5
United States	G4
United Kingdom	C4
United Arab Repullic	G4
Yugoslavia	G4
USSR	C9

500 250 0 500 1000 1500 2000 2500
METRES

Main Road	Hotel & Restaurants
Secondary Road	Embassies & Consulates
Foot Weather Road	Post Office
Foot Path	Hospital
Petrol Stations	Miscellaneous
Points of Interest	
Government offices	

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KABUL: CITY AT THE CROSSROADS

Introduction

Kabul, the capital city, stands out uniquely in Afghanistan where ca. 90% of the population lives outside the urban millieu in villages, nomadic camps and semi-nomadic encampments. Six true cities exist which account for about 75% of Afghanistan's urban population, but again, Kabul is four and a half times larger than the country's second largest city. It is, therefore, doubly atypical of Afghanistan in which urbanization is itself a deviant. To understand Kabul, it is necessary to keep its uniqueness constantly in mind.

Population Figures

Afghanistan	17.4 million
Kabul	600,000 (Greater Kabul 750,000)
Kandahar	130,000
Herat	85,000
Mazar-i-Sharif	45,000
Kunduz	35,000
Jalalabad	15,000

In the fall of 1974 the population of Kabul was officially announced to be 750,000. Although Afghanistan has never conducted a basic census, "development" must be based on statistics so figures are amassed and the future projected according to "intelligent estimates," which are in reality simply wild guesses based on inadequate data* collected from time to time, by various groups, to promote specific vested interests. An annual growth of 2 1/2% was projected for Kabul some years ago, for instance, and this figure is conscientiously added to the basic figure each year. In terms of urban growth rates in Asia which generally fluctuate between 3% and 10% annually, this is not high and may not, in fact, be too unreasonable but it is probably much inflated. It is not clear, for instance, which of the rural settlements in the vicinity of Kabul have been reclassified as urban. For the purposes of this discussion, however, the exactness of the figures is of minor consequence. It is the patterns that emerge which are important. In this instance: in reality there are two Afghanistans - Kabul, and the rest of the country.

Kabul's uniqueness is attitudinal as well as physical. Variations of social strata common to most urban situations exist within the city including a group which is to Kabul what Kabul is to the rest of the country. Composed of social elites and certain groups of intellectuals and professionals, its distinctiveness stems not so much from affluence, but from attitudes which focus ideals, aspirations and life-styles on models from outside the traditional Afghan cultural pattern. The manifestations of these attitudes are easy to spot. Members of this group dress in the latest fashions, speak foreign languages flawlessly, are highly literate and sophisticated, and they hold positions in prestige ministries, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in businesses with foreign contacts.

Most importantly, not many of this group have travelled outside Kabul,

* as phrased by L. Dupree

within Afghanistan, though most have travelled extensively abroad. Indeed, few even have an interest in travelling inside the country and the myths they perpetuate about the dangers of visiting Nuristan, the folly of penetrating the Wakhan and the hostility of the Hazarajat, are wonderous to hear. In all fairness, it must be admitted that these attitudes are changing slowly as roads are paved and adequate hotels spring up in the provinces. Still, their outward-orientation continues strong, and has steadily increased since the end of the 19th century when Afghanistan first began to intensify its contacts with the outside. Secure in the belief that the outward-oriented way of life is superior to the traditional, the ruling elite of Kabul dictate programmes for "the good" of the provinces and, for the moment at least, the provinces send in little feedback.

The bulk of the people living in Kabul look upon this outward-oriented segment of society as being something apart, but their role in the modernization and transition processes is of decided importance. More and more people are looking more and more closely at their life-styles and aspiring to join them.

Particularly, one thinks of the girls and young women who have taken advantage of increased educational opportunities to come out into society to work in government and business. Afghan Films recently released the excellent film Andarz-i-Madar (Mother's Advice) which dramatizes the stresses inherent in the transition from a traditional to a modern life-style. Confining discussion of this phenomenon primarily to the effects it has on the city of Kabul, one can mention the appearance of girls demonstrating in the streets for the first time in Afghan history (1971). They protested the actions of ultra-conservatives opposing their emergence into the outward-oriented group to pursue modern education, dress in mini-skirts and pants suits, and travel abroad.

Shopping patterns are also affected. In 1959 Prime Minister Daoud (President Daoud since July 1973) declared the voluntary removal of the veil and signalled the emancipation of women in Afghanistan. Traditionally, women did not move in the market places, sending male members of the family to purchase food, household goods, cloth for clothing, or whatever. This is not the case today, and even those ladies who have not yet felt the freedom to shed the veil will frequent bazaars and shops to make their own choices even though still clothed in the traditional chadri which envelops them from head to foot. Some observers have equated the more frequent sight of ladies in chadri in the streets of Kabul as an indication of conservative retrogression. On the contrary, it signals freedom of choice, a greater mobility, and a freedom to penetrate areas far from the residential unit. It is, in many cases, the final step before abandoning the veil. And, beneath the chadri modern styles gradually replace the traditional costume, so that throughout the city myriad tailoring establishments operate late into the night even on Friday, the Muslim day of rest.

Or, one may cite the growth of individualism encouraged by the outward-orientation, resulting in demands for separate housing in preference to joint-family institutions. This creates a change in housing patterns and a move towards single-family and apartment dwelling. Urban sprawl in Kabul is as much the result of such attitudinal social changes as it is of ordinary population increases.

Urbanized modernization is certainly disrupting certain social institutions

and causing personal disorganization. Too often the forms are adopted without an understanding of the substance; too often traditional values are discarded simply becuase they are "old fashioned" and values become skewed and meaningless. Frustration, the bane of urbanization, results. But the young people of Kabul, particularly, are very desirous of becoming a part of the outward-oriented segment of society and they feel they can do so because great affluence is no prerequisite. Changes in attitude and behavior are what they cry for. Forty thousand students graduated from highschools in Afghanistan in 1974; Kabul University graduates 1,000 each year. They represent varying degrees of modernized thinking in a blending of traditional values with new, often only half-understood, attitudes. To understand Kabul where most of the outward-oriented concentrate, it is important to keep in mind that traditional, emerging and truly outward-oriented life-styles exist in the city side by side. Any remark made for one may be totally misleading for the others.

The outward-oriented segment of Kabul, in all degrees of sophistication, provides the impetus for most of the numerous roles Kabul plays in the life of the nation. Kabul is the seat of the central government, the hub of business and commerce, the focal point for intellectual and political movements, and the disseminator of projected change. Kabul is critical to the development of Afghanistan as a nation-state, and the state of the nation will be markedly affected by the degree to which Kabul can lose some of its uniqueness by reducing the inequities between it and the regional cities and, most importantly, by linking the ideals of the outward-looking Kabuli with those of the rest of the country. The future of Kabul and of Afghanistan rests on such a merger.

History

Kabul is relatively new to its position of paramountcy. All the other cities listed above have far older histories, some, such as Kandahar, stretching back into extreme antiquity, to the Bronze Age of 5,000 years ago. Herat was the capital of the brilliant Timurid Empire during the 15th century, and Kandahar became the capital of an Afghan Empire established by Ahmad Shah Durrani in the mid-18th century. Archaeological evidence establishes that Kabul existed from the earliest days of the A.D. era, but while empires rose and fell in Begram, Ghazni, Herat and Kandahar, Kabul remained a sleepy backwater town. A Buddhist retreat under the Kushans (1st-5th A.D.), a principality under the Hephthalites and Hindu Shahi (5th-10th A.D.), a military garrison and commercial bazaar under the Ghaznavids, Timurids, Moghuls and Durrani (to the mid-18th century), Kabul remained on the periphery of the action.

The reason is easy to detect. All Afghanistan's cities, except Kabul, lie on the plains and grew up in response to commerce as major hubs and transshipment depots on routes with links with China, Rome, Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley and India. Even today all these cities, except Kabul, are within easy access to international borders and owe their life primarily to their position on modern routes of commerce. Jalalabad, with a population of only 15,000, for instance, can hardly be considered a major city from the standpoint of the size of its population. The role it performs in conjunction with the others, all of which sit within one hour of border points through which goods and peoples flow into and out of the country, demands its consideration.

Kabul, on the other hand, lies in the heart of the mountains at an altitude of

6,000 feet. Access from the north is via high passes in the Hindu Kush mountians. No practicable access pierces the mountains on the west, and on the east the routes plummet off the Kabul Plateau into tortuous gorges. From the south, roads wind through high, less precipitous ranges but the way was for long inhabited by fierce and demanding tribes feared by caravaneers and travellers alike.

Political dissension initiated Kabul's rise to prominence. Ahmad Shah Durrani's son, Timur Shah, quarrelled with the tribal elite of Kandahar and moved his court to Kabul in 1776. The history of the last half of the 18th century and the entire 19th century concerns the gradual extension of the power of the Kabul amirs over the area now known as Afghanistan. This was finally accomplished during the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman (1880-1901). The position of Kabul as the primate city was further solidified during the prime-ministership of Mohammad Daoud (1953-1963) when the infrastructure was dramatically improved. Kabul became a true nodal point in the communications network of the entire nation to which peoples, goods and ideas flowed and from which innovations emanated.

Once established, this mysterious city of the mountains attracted all manner of travellers and adventurers from many lands. Some left behind their estimates of its size. They are "intelligent estimates" at their best.

1776	10,000
early 19th century	60,000
ca. 1880	100,000
1901	140,000
1948	206,208
1954	215,000
1962	224,134
1965	289,000
1970	500,000
1974	750,000

The large initial increases reflect its new stature as the seat of royalty. The political instability of the entire 19th century was accompanied by a comparatively slow rate of growth until the last two decades of Amir Abdur Rahman's reign. The beginnings of a relatively modest increase occasioned by the establishment of Kabul as the, rather than a, political center continued for the next 50 years without drama or many major changes. King Amanullah's (1919-1929) attempts to build a grandiose new city of European design was halted by revolution, but even had it continued, it would appear to have been more for embellishment than a correction of the city's growing ills. The planners, in fact, literally turned their backs on the ancient ground and built in the fields six miles to the south.

After the revolution, King Nadir Shah's (1929-1933) energies and monies were devoted to the rehabilitation of a torn nation, rather than to the growth of the capital city and it is only with the advent of the decade of Mohammad Daoud during the reign of King Zahir Shah (1933-1973) that the sudden intensification of development programs generated a tremendous spurt in growth patterns which have continued to this day, decade by decade.

It is possible to argue that the recent increases in population figures may be attributed to the automatic addition of the $2^{1}/2$% projected increase or simply to a greater concern for statistics. The following discussion of the spatial expansion of Kabul will, however, leave no doubt about its swelling proportions, no matter what the accuracy of the figures may be.

Physcical Characteristics

The city of Kabul sits in a bowl, surrounded on all sides by barren, treeless mountains which are snow-capped in winter, an emerald green for a few short weeks in spring, and a dusty brown during the rest of the year. These mountains begin to rise about 8 miles from the city on the west, 6 miles on the south, and 15 miles on the east. Three miles north of the city a low ridge cuts off the city from the Koh Daman, an extensive extremely fertile valley extending for 40 miles up to the base of the Hindu Kush. Sunset and sunrise drench these mountains in hues ranging from violet to shocking pink so that their dimensions are ever-changing and never monotonous, although some observers find their majesty over-awesome and consequently claustrophobic.

Kabul's most dominant physical feature is a rocky ridge swinging straight through its center. Itself cut in two by the Kabul River, this ridge divides the city both geographically and socially; the northern portion called Koh-i-Asmai, rising 1,000 feet above the left bank of the river, and Sher Darwaza 1,500 feet above the south bank.

The original town of 10,000 to which Timur Shah brought the capital in 1776 snuggled against the foot of Sher Darwaza, between the river and the mountain which bends in a southeasterly curve to a spur occupied by a citadel. A stout wall, beginning at the citadel and running along the crests of Koh-i-Asmai and Sher Darwaza, encircled the entire inhabited area except for one village called Deh Afghanan built by the alien Pushtun from the south.

By 1880, although the city had grown ten fold, the area had not expanded significantly. Congestion was reaching intolerable proportions. Also, during a short occupation of the valley by a British army during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880), the citadel had been destroyed. These two factors prompted Amir Abdur Rahman to build a new palace and citadel to the north of the river thus giving to Kabul a classic Central Asian appearance for the first time. From this time forward the socio-commercial-political organization of the city has been determined by the division into the "old" and the "new" city, marked by the Kabul River. This is a feature common to most cities and towns in Afghanistan.

The "old city" south of the river consists of a residential section and several bazaar areas, one of which traverses the heart of the residential area, from the old gates of the citadel to the river. Known as Shor Bazaar, this unpaved street contains several specialty bazaars carrying such items as Indian condiments for the large Hindu and Sikh communities resident here, and occasional "neighborhood" bazaar shops featuring basic, everyday supplies.

Further toward the river, just a block south of its banks, a broad, paved, five-lane avenue runs almost due east-west. This represents the first attempt to come to grips with the creeping ills of urbanization in Kabul. In 1949 the newly established Kabul Municipality literally bulldozed through the heart of residential old Kabul to create this open space. Called Jadi Maiwand, it is Kabul's main bazaar shopping area in which 50% of Kabul's shops are located. Modern-style 3-story buildings face the avenue on either side acting as a bright façade. The façade is only one building deep and behind it traditional style residences, old style serais, and narrow, winding, maloderous alleyways persist. Very few of the city's basic services, such as

water supply and sewage disposal, reach into this section behind the façade.

Morevoer, in spite of the wide open spaces, sidewalks, brick and glass, several classic features common to traditional Central Asian Bazaar towns remain. The upper stories contain offices and residences and the street level is lined by a series of one-roomed shops specializing in a single main commodity. Furthermore, as in the classic bazaar, many shops selling the same merchandize cluster together so that as one moves down the avenue one finds a number of shops selling sweets, followed by those festooned with aluminum pots and pans made on the premises, then textiles, crockery, automobile parts, or whatever. The shops are small, as in the case with most shops throughout the city, and one study estimates that in Kabul there is approximately one shop for every 30 persons. In some cases, the inventory is limited because of the limited space, but in other cases, as with notions shops, the variety is staggering, although the number of any one item is necessarily curtailed by the size of the shop.

Outside these shops which are locked with wooden shutters at night, countless street vendors display their wares on the sidewalk, on the backs of donkeys, or on their own person. Here stocks are even more limited, but prices are considerably cheaper. Bargaining is prevelent with the street vendors; less so but not unknown with the shopkeepers in their shops along the avenue. Services as well as goods may be purchased from the sidewalk: shoes repaired, teapots mended, hair cut, fortunes told.

Periodically the modern facade is broken to allow access to a number of specialty bazaars dealing in wholesale grains, carpets, birds, books, raw cotton and mattress making, second hand clothing, paper flowers, and musical instruments. In addition, specialists such as musicians and prostitutes maintain their establishments here. The traditional money bazaar still finances 60% of all foreign trade transactions in spite of the fact that modern banks have existed in the city since 1933. Numerous teahouses, restaurants and traditional-style hotels dot the avenue at this busy hub of commercial/industrial activity. In other words, there is no segregation of land use in this old part of Kabul: both wholesale and retail commercial transactions, crafts and banking as well as personal services are carried on next to residential units. This is again an extension of characteristic town patterns developed during the heyday of camel caravans when cities grew up in response to their position on the trade routes, around the caravanserais which were their lifeblood.

Another traditional feature of this part of Kabul is the existence of a large Friday or congregational mosque at the focal point of the bazaar area. Traditionally, the Friday mosque was also the civic and educational center as well, but now these functions have been largely taken over by secular institutions. Religiously, the Pul-i-Khishti Mosque in the Jadi Maiwand area is extremely influential and several conservative demonstrations were staged from its courtyard during the last years of the monarchy.

A religious focus pervades this part of the city, and does not need political crises to give it a meaningful place in the daily life of the people. There are 350 mosques in the city, generally speaking one mosque within one kilometer of every household. This may be compared, for instance, with the fact that a primary school may be as far as $2^1/2$ kilometers away, and the place of work several miles from home. The usual neighborhood mosque is seldom as elaborate as the Pul-i-Khishti mosque and many may be passed without notice. Afghans do not require ornate buildings in order to experience religious inspiration

and often they may be seen praying in the back of their small shops or in the parks scattered throughout the city. Theirs is a personalized communion between man and God which needs no architectural stimulae.

Several bridges for pedestrians and/or vehicular traffic span the Kabul River which divides the old from the new city, and lead into downtown commercial/ administrative Kabul. Formerly another crowded, haphazardly organized area, this part of the city has received determined attention from the city planners since the early 1960s when its heart was torn out and replaced by the spacious park called Zarnegar (Adorned with Gold). Here one finds most of the features acceptable to any definition of a modern city: paved roads, multi-story buildings, department stores, glass fronts, businessmen's hotels, gleaming government offices, banks, wide streets, hidden sewage, parks and squares adorned with flowerbeds and fountains. The sidewalks are less cluttered with street vendors; the streets are choked with vehicles.

The main commercial, as opposed to Jadi Mainwand's bazaar area, section on this side of the river is another façade, one building deep, masking the old village of Deh Afghanan. Many features distinguish this row of shops from those along Jadi Maiwand. Glass fronts replace wooden shutters, many shops have several rooms and even two or more floors, and there is more diversification though shops carrying similar merchandize still tend to cluster together in the traditional manner. Here inventories consist primarily of imports.

The north and west peripheries of downtown Kabul are ringed with Kabul's most prestigeous residential sections of Shahr-i-Nao, Sherpur, and the most recent Wazir Akbar Khan, home of embassies and diplomats. As one would expect, these are low density areas and the residents are the most outward-oriented. Primarily an area of one-story houses with large gardens, it is also the area where Kabul's first apartment house was built. Apartment living is becoming increasingly popular in this area, but as will be discussed later, this is very much a symbol of the outward-oriented. Many other symbols of the outward-oriented are to be found here: fashionable boutiques, department stores and supermarkets with imports from Switzerland, Germany, England, the Soviet Union, India, Pakistan, France and Australia account for about 15% of Kabul's shops. Bakeries offer breads and pastries made by cooks trained in foreign households, although traditional <u>nan</u> (lightly leavened bread) shops dot the area also. Restaurants feature Chinese delicacies, hearty German fare, chicken-in-the-basket, soft ice-creams, hamburgers, Italian pastas and vegetarian delights. At the same time, some of the best <u>kabab</u> (skewered lamb) shops are located in Sherpur. Music, live and taped, fills the night air along with the crash of bowling balls. Cinemas, pingpong and junglegyms adorn the park.

Not suprisingly, the greatest concentration of tourist shops exist in this area, but for the tourist one of the greatest delights is the Fruit Bazaar with its wares piled in the traditional fashion. Flowers crowd the sidewalk. Wooden shutters still close many of the shops in this small bazaar, though affluence and the Municipality's health codes have led many to convert to glass fronts. Classically, the large, blue-tiled Sherpur Mosque sits at the hub of this fashionable shopping area. In short, both old and new coexist delightfully in these elitist residential subdivisions.

These are the more dramatic sections of Kabul. Other more purely residential quarters with small neighborhood shopping areas now surround Koh-i-Asmai on all sides and Koti Sangi, at its westermost tip, is rapidly becoming the secondary

hub or sub-center of Kabul. In many cases what were formerly villages have simply been incorporated as suburbia; many retain their village names. In other cases, walled villages still stand in a sea of middle-class suburban housing, holding out one knows not for how much longer against the encroachments of urbanization. The fields which once surrounded these villages have long since disappeared under concrete or green lawns and Kabul now has to be fed from much further away.

The only part of the Kabul Valley not experiencing residential expansion lies on the northeast, in an area designed as an industrial park. A few open spaces, fields and meadows are yet to be seen on the outskirts, but in a short time all such open spaces must be filled if Kabul is to keep pace with the projected increases in population. Experts have calculated that the building rate must be increased from the present 1500 units per year to a minimum of 4,000. Furthermore, they have devised a new building formula for the city:

Present		Future	
one-story	55%	1-2 stories	15%
2-5 stories	45%	3-5 stories	70%
		9-12 stories	15%

The new formula is astounding in light of past warnings that it is unwise in earthquake zones to build over six stories. Kabul lies in such a zone, but the foundation stone for its first 14-story building was laid on 23 March, 1975 at the western end of Jadi Maiwand. To be named the Pamir after the country's highest mountains, it is scheduled to be completed within the next two years. Owned by the Pension Department of the Finance Ministry, it will house a cinema, shops, supermarket, restaurants and commercial offices. At the moment it is not clear exactly how necessary such a high rise is in this area, and certain practical considerations like parking are not clearly defined. One hopes that it will not prove to be simply a symbol of modernity purely for modernity's sake. Many of Kabul's residents fear so, and express little enthusiasm for the project.

Traffic congestion is fast becoming a problem. The primarily middle class housing subdivisions are located for the most part on the outskirts of the city and populated primarily by employees in government departments located in central, downtown Kabul as far as seven to ten miles away from the residential areas. Cars proliferate each year but many must rely on public transportation which is notoriously poor and inadequate. It has been estimated that 600 buses are needed to provide minimum service for Kabul whereas only 400 now exist and of these over 60% are in such a dilapidated condition that to ride them is not only uncomfortable but even hazardous. As a result, thousands sally forth on bicycles to create their own hazards for motorists.

In addition, roads are too few and too narrow. Only one main road leads from each of the major highways into the center of town. All goods and peoples enter the city by some form of vehicle or on animal back, for there is no railroad in the country. Recently a few wholesale depots have been established midway to the central serais but still, heavily laden commercial traffic rumbles along with the commuters in their cars or on their bicycles, creating crushing slowups.

The Republic is cognizant of the problems. In April 1975 the National Bus

Service was established and contracts were signed for the purchase of almost 400 large and mini buses, many of which will no doubt be consigned to improve Kabul's services. Traffic patterns have been improved, high school graduates trained as traffic police, new avenues opened, and programs initiated to educate Kabul's citizenry against the evils of jaywalking. Significantly, traffic revenues doubled during the past year.

One major problem persists: how does one proceed from point A at the northern foot of Koh-i-Asmai to point B on its southern side without wrestling through heavy downtown or suburban traffic. The answer lies in a road over the mountain which was begun several years ago up the northern slope but which was stymied by the existance of illegal housing on the southern slope. Past governments elected to ignore this spontaneous housing, but the Republic has announced its intention to destroy all unauthorized constructions when they are not consistent with the interests of the city. It will be difficult. The outcome will be one indication of how strong the new regime intends to make the Municipality.

Population Characteristics

The citizen of Kabul whose active cooperation the Municipality must seek are a heterogeneous and self-sufficient lot about whom it is dangerous to generalize. The citified Kabuli may be hesitant about going out into the countryside, but the countryside pours into the city of Kabul. Still, it is also said of Kabul: it's a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there. Or, to phrase it more idiomatically as the Hazara in the villages of the Hazarajat put it: the air of Kabul stinks.

Originally a Tajik town, the city has taken unto itself members of every ethnic group in Afghanistan so that now only about one-half of the population is Persian speaking Tajik and Qizilbash (descendants of Persian military and civilian administrators who came in the 18th century). One quarter of Kabul's citizens are Hazara from the Central Mountains and the Hazara, like the Qizilbash are predominately Shia, the minority Muslim sect in Afghanistan. The final quarter is made up of Pushtun and Baluch from the east and south, Nuristani from the east, Uzbak and Turkoman from the north, as well as small Hindu, Sikh and Jewish communities.

These ethnic groups increase annually and the projections for population expansion indicate that the increases will owe more to rural-urban migration than to natural causes. This migration phenomenon began to develop significantly during the past ten years. Before that, the movement from village to city was rather slow, but with the improvement in the infrastructure, the rate accelerated rapidly so that now about 13,000 migrants are expected in the city each year, and from 20-30 percent of those living in the city today were born outside it. The majority come from villages within easy accessibility of the Kabul Valley. The Panjsher Valley, a few hours away, is a major contributor to the migration phenomenon, but so is the Hazarajat, a good day's journey away. Only about 30% of the migrants come from the northern provinces.

These migrants come to the city in kin related groups, either in family, ethnic or geographic units, either as nuclear families, or, initially at least, as single males. Most importantly, they come to join related groups already established in the city with whom they interact according to well-defined, well-understood systems of reciprocal, functioning rights and obligations. As such, they do not constitute the cancerous outgrowths that plague so many Asian cities ringed with migrant settlements having no identity with the people

living inside. They establish instead, pockets in special sections of the city which are very closely-knit communities supplying every ingredient necessary for self-identification, social welfare, and cooperative support.

The cohesive interactions within these communities go beyond residential and social unity and embrace economic security as well. Unlike other Asian cities where migrants prove lacking in the ability to make a living as town's people, migrants to Kabul often come to work temporarily in already established family businesses or are set up in small businesses of their own with joint-family funds. The newly established industrial complex adds new dimensions to the traditional employment scene.

Generally speaking, certain groups have traditionally moved in to specialized occupations. The Tajiks from the Panjsher Valley, for instance, maintained a virtual monopoly as domestic servants in foreign households, but the Hazara are moving into this area now as they are moving into carpet merchandizing formerly the preserve of Uzbak and Turkoman. The Hazara also dominate the wood and charcoal markets. In fact, the classic picture of the Hazara as lowly day laborers and coolies needs considerable redrawing in the light of socio-economic mobility patterns. Up until recently, the money bazaar was entirely made up of Hindus, Sikhs and Jews but today several Uzbak families have become prominent in the business, and many Jews have gone into other businesses, such as carpet merchandizing. Considerable mobility therefore exists within all groups.

Often migrants come with no intention of establishing permanent residence. Some come as seasonal specialists. Others come for short periods, usually on the off-agricultural season, to work in small family-oriented manufacturing endeavours employing from 2 to 20 workers scattered throughout the city, or, in the industries concentrated on the outskirts of the city. The transient nature of these workers who come in after the fall harvest as unskilled labor only to vanish in the spring after attaining a modicum of skill, is a problem confronting the burgeoning industrial scene. Furthermore, because they maintain close ties with such a high level intensity, the migrants in effect use their city-earned money not to further urbanization, but to intensify traditional rural patterns. Taking their city profits back to the village they acquire brides and land, and build summer homes. Economic independence and social prestige are thereby increased, and this may lead ultimately to political power.

The split between being city-based and rural-oriented causes stresses which can errupt into family feuds originating in the village but enacted in the city. This brings them into contact with the municipal police but often solutions are found by referral to traditional village councils whose decisions are accepted by the urban judicial institution. This happens on numerous occasions on the express suggestion of the urban institution which can not as yet replace the rural network of responsibilities based on long, workable traditions.

Although in some areas as many as 80% of the men have worked or are currently working in Kabul, it is not always the push of a poor coutryside which sends people to the city although pressures or population growth on the rugged landscape of Afghanistan is a problem needing careful attention. The city attracts because of the excitement, the opportunities (money, education) and the influence (concentration of key industrial, commercial, governmental, social and service institutions) which Kabul has, and the rest of the country does not.

To most migrants it is a lucrative place to earn and an exhilerating place to play, but not a home. This is of concern to the city, for the identification with the rural will continue until the city can offer adequate subsititutes for that delicate network of reciprocal, kin-oriented rights and obligations which it does not, and can not, now do.

Organizational Patterns

The permanent residents of the city exhibit many components of the village in-group attitudes even though strict kinship patterns have been somewhat eroded by urbanization. These attitudes are crucial to the development of a civic consciousness, which is now lacking.

In fact, it is dangerous to apply contemporary Western norms to the city of Kabul which is essentially a functional unit, and not a civic unit with effective grass-roots local government and citizen-oriented institutions.

Traditionally, Kabul was a self-maintaining, self-defending entity. It was surrounded by walls which marked it off from the hostilities of the vast, hostile landscape in which it sat and which protected it from the incursions of rivals from Kandahar and Herat. It looked inward upon itself.

Inside the city walls the old residential section was a composite of segregated units based on family, ethnic and/or religious groups and these units were also self-maintining and self-protecting, even to having huge gates which could be closed, one against the other. They often were during the turbulent 19th century. Within the unit, however, a strong sense of community existed along with the organizational institutions necessary to maintain its well-being. Today, only two really distinctive areas exist in the old city once surrounded by city walls: Chandawal, predominately inhabited the Shia Qizilbash, on the west; and the Hindu section further to the east in the vicinity of the citadel mound. Still, the attitudes rising from an identification by unit rather than with the city as a whole pervades the whole population of Kabul.

The private architecture in the old city reflects the self-protecting, inward-looking attitudes of the unit. Massive walls presenting blank and anonymous faces to the outside, are pierced by single small doorways through which one enters into courtyards where the full life of joint families is enacted, free from the gaze of outsiders. At first glance, the architecture of the modern residential subdivisions seems far less forbidding and open. Walls are lower, and balconies jut forth above them. However, high trees and flowering shrubs shield the inmates from the eyes of passersby and curtains remain drawn behind the balconies on which no one actually sits. Moreover, the walls are pierced by single small doorways. These anonymous doorways lead into flowering gardens but the architecture reflects the same private life-style of the old city.

Inward-looking attitudes engendered within the segregated city units were accentuated by the historical fact that the rulers who sat in Kabul's citadel, itself a segregated unit with its own massive defence system, have always been foreigners and thus alien to the indigenous Tajik population: Kushan from Central Asia in the early centuries A.D.; Hindu Shahi from the 7th-9th centuries; Turks and Turco-Mongols from Central Asia, such as Timurids in the 15th, Moghuls in the 16th; Qizilbash and Pushtun in the 18th; and Pushtun since the 18th. These rulers looked to the city for taxes and for men for their armies, but they took little interest in the well being of the city.

Another factor mitigating against a development of civic concern is the presence of the central government seated in its midst. Too often the center impinges on the functions of the municipality and the dual responsibility leads to confusion and at times to outright stagnation. There have been dynamic mayors from time to time, but too often, precisely because of its weakness and because no one takes the municipality seriously, the position has been used as a political plum, or filled by men with no experience and, worse, no interest, in the administration of a city. But the people of Kabul are not prompted to action when times are bad or, for that matter, to take advantage of the situation when a dynamic mayor does come to office. There simply is no tradition for citizen participation in the welfare of the city as a whole; no concept of a cohesive community which transcends the family/ethnic/geographic unit and embraces the entire city.

The Mayor of Kabul, now appointed under the Republic, has in the past been elected and theoretically two members from each of Kabul's 10 official wards are elected to a Municipal Council, but all processes are in abeyance at the moment while the Republic reassesses and promulgates new directives. In the past, however, participation in municipal elections has been less than enthusiastic. The majority who bother to cast their ballots do so according to ethnic or kinship ties and the sophisticated, outward-oriented literates either dismiss the process as being a fraud or bogus, or, cast their ballots for friends and family. Issues have yet to be articulated strongly enough to override in-group considerations.

The well-being of the city, therefore, depends on the charisma of the mayor and the interest of the central government, and only secondarily on its citizens. Three 25-year master plans for the city of Kabul have been proposed. The first was designed by the UN technical assistance programme in 1962 and was quickly followed by another formulated in 1964 with the assistance of the Soviet Union. The Ministry of Public Works submitted its proposals in a third plan, in 1972.

A number of the physical changes in Kabul during the last few years have resulted from the partial implementation of these plans. New highways and parks are noticable. In May 1975 the Water Supply and Sewage System was established to extend these services beyond the 1/5th of the population receiving a sanitary water supply. Hydro-electric projects have stabilized the power supply. The Fire Department functions efficiently. Other parts have been grossly ignored or deliberately discounted. The spontaneous housing on the slopes of Koh-i-Asmai is an example. Mere roads and buildings are not the sole solution of Kabul's potential problems, however.

Institutions designed to handle changes, and to replace traditional socio-welfare systems exist, but grow very slowly. The Women's Institute, founded in 1946, was just given autonomy. The Afghan Red Crescent Society provides aid and training to the needy. Family Guidance Centers first established in 1968 are increasing in number and effectiveness. A new department carries health education into the homes. New poly-clinics for child/mother care have come into being. The marriage courts are becoming responsive to the needs and demands of the outward-oriented youth seeking legal support against traditional customs.

A home for the destitute functions, but Kabul is relatively free from street beggers, compared to other major Asian cities. Those who may be found

have discovered that tourists often hand out coppers. Only in those areas where tourists abound is one liable to be accosted by beggars, legitimate or otherwise. This is because Afghans adhere to the Islamic custom of khairat (almsgiving) and shopkeepers, restaurant owners, and many householders have special days on which they dispense small amounts of money or food. This is a most personalized tradition which intense urbanization may tend to erode. To provide for a shift from personal responsibility to public institutions, the city will have to initiate a much expanded welfare programme.

It seems that the Republic is committed to a healthy future for the city. Since the Republic came into being in 1973, the Municipality has made concerted efforts to collect property taxes, compel owners to cement sidewalks crossing their property, and otherwise involve the people of Kabul in the affairs of the city outside their private, protected compounds. On May 4, 1975, a Kabul Times editorial confidently stated: "There is a reservoir of good will for the Municipal Corporation among the citizens, and the residents of the city have favorably responded to all calls made by their Municipal Corporation."

Hopefully, their optimism is well-founded. To really capture good-will, however, the Municipal Corporation must establish an aura of dynamic strength for itself which is now lacking. One decisive step may have been taken recently when the Department of City Planning within the central Ministry of Public Works was merged with the Municipal Corporation. However, this department is responsible for all cities in the country and one wonders why Kabul should be saddled with the larger responsibility, or even if it should be allowed to dictate to regional cities. If it is a goal to break down Kabul's uniqueness, the regions should be allowed to develop independently of Kabul's control or influence.

The social consequences of some of the proposals will be critical to the future of the city. It is proposed, for instance, to destroy and rebuild the old residential area of Shor Bazaar where there are few amenities and unhealthy conditions abound in the lonely streets outside the fort-like residences. This area covers only 4% of Kabul, but 40% of the population lives here so the impact on social customs and the reorientation of life-styles is bound to be momentous and one hopes it will not be catastrophic. It is encouraging to note that some of the planners have suggested a closer study be made of the cohesive operating in the segregated units of the old city so as to isolate those which might be utilized in easing the entrance of its people into metropolitan living.

One attempt at urban renewal was begun in the 1960s when the government built 51 blocks containing 1702 apartments. Designed for middle-income families, the development took a long time to catch on. Initially, the purchase price was too high and for a long time the apartments either went empty, were occupied by government departments, or by upper-income families who then rented their fashionable homes to foreigners for high rents. Those for whom the apartments were intended, however, had initially rejected apartment living. Sharing an entrance stairway with five other families was too appalling to contemplate and balconies in no way replaced the seclusion of rooftops. Efficiency kitchens strike hard at basic prestige symbols such as servants and leisure.

Instead of accepting the government's solution to urban renewal, those families wishing to escape the conditions of the old city even though they did not have the means or the qualifications to acquire land in the new sub-divisions, simply appropriated space on the stony slopes of Koh-i-Asmai. Water must be carried up on the backs of men or animals from pipes at the base of the mountain, and tenure

is dubious because the occupation of the land is illegal, but these inconveniences were minor compared to the problems posed by apartment living. Significantly, the houses on Asmai can in no way be labeled as squatter's huts. These are well-designed, well-built, solid, middle-class housing.

The Republic evicted the illegal, upper-income families from the aprtment complex, lowered the purchasing costs and in the interim attitudinal changes made apartment living seem more acceptable. Young married couples wishing to break away from joint-family living find these apartments ideal. Today the units are full and urban manifestations are at their most rampant here where laundry festoons balconies still unused for sitting, the shrieks of children rebound from concrete walls, and reeling tricycles and bouncing balls provide real hazards for the passerby. Continuing its apparent desire to strengthen the municipality, a protocol of April 3, 1974, officially transferred Nadir Shah Maina, as the complex is named, to the Kabul Municipal Corporation.

The Future

It is well that the Republic should be concerned, for if the experts are correct, by the turn of the century Kabul will no longer be a city but a metropolis with a population of 1,350,000, or, according to some estimates, from 2.7 to 3.7 million.

What then? Will Kabul be able to make the transition from city to metropolis without the attendant evils of urbanization as we see them manifested in so many Asian cities, and in the West? Will it, for instance, acquire a rising crime rate? It has no major crime problem today. Kabul is certainly standing at a crucial crossroad, and one hopes that it can find an independent path to follow without adhering too slavishly to the models it has before it.

Physical growth, services, revenues and beautification are receiving attention. The zoo, the museum, art, the theatre, the cinema receive funds and concern. Each year signs of modernity increase. If the concept of urbanization is to be seen as a positive, rather than a cancerous processess it must, however, be looked upon as an instrument of social change and development and not simply a creature of physical growth. In this important respect Kabul would seem to possess several traditions on which a dynamically different future might be built. If they are studied and adapted, and not discarded and broken.

The particularistic loyalties of the segregated family/ethnic units are condemned by many planners for they seem to stand in the way of comprehensive plans, zoning laws, and other such concepts which can not endure individualism. Yet individualism is a key Afghan personality trait which should not be sacrificed to the dehumanization of anonimity so often associated with urbanization. One goal for Kabul's future should be to arouse popular concern, participation and involvement in the issues and politics of the city. To meet this goal the more intimate traditional unit of neighborhood with its established institutions of social control and organization should be utilized, not condemned. Furthermore, issues can be made more directly relevant and elicit deeper involvement when they are related to the needs of the small unit. Not enough is known today about how these units function, but this would seem to be a worthy avenue for study.

Social, political, economic and intellectual movements germinating in the city

of Kabul are critical to development throughout the country. Yet there is a danger that hostitilies may develop in the gap of inequities which exists between the city governed by outward-oriented elites, and the regions controlled by traditional elites. Historically, the elite of the city have tended to rely on repressive measures to maintain control. With the peculiar migration patterns operating in Kabul, however, it may be possible to capitalize on the city-based/ regional-oriented pattern in order to establish more meaningful political links between the two. Economically, the flow of city-earned monies to the region may be utilized to minimize the regional inequities which are a feature of the national economy. The strengthening of provincial cities and perhaps even the creation of new cities in the various regions would take the pressure off Kabul and bring about a decentralization to break Kabul's uniqueness and provide more equitable development for all the people of Afghanistan. A movement toward regionalizing the educational institutions has been initiated by the Republic. Urbanization might well benefit from a comparable program.

By encouraging pride and development in the region while at the same time embuing diverse groups in Kabul with outward-oriented concepts of a nation-state, new forms of order may emerge. The blend of the old with the new should make them strong. Again, not enough is known about the migration phenomenon. Exactly what makes people move? Is it the poverty of the countryside or the excitment of the city? Or both? Or something entirely different? The answers may well be vital to the life of Kabul, and to Afghanistan.

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